

May / June 2011

# adoption

opening hearts. changing lives.

INDIANA'S ADOPTION PROGRAM



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## **Jessica (16)**

Jessica likes to laugh and has a beautiful smile! She is friendly and easy to talk to. When asked what she would like others to know about her, she responded, "I can be very sweet and loving." Jessica loves to read and can get lost in a good book. She also loves to cook and says her specialty dish is chicken-cheese lasagna. Jessica likes school and is an Honor Roll student. She enjoys doing crafts, going out for Chinese food with her mentor, and shopping for shoes! When she grows up, Jessica thinks she would like to become either a chef or a cosmetologist.

Jessica is looking forward to being adopted and ideally would like to have both a mom and a dad although she is open to a single parent as well. Jessica needs a loving family that will give her guidance while providing a safe, consistent environment with clear boundaries and expectations. (7017BD) *Madison County*



## ***Welcome to the Indiana Adoption Program***

The Indiana Adoption Program is a statewide effort to create permanence for children who are wards of the State of Indiana. It is a program of the Indiana Department of Child Services in collaboration with the Indiana Foster Care & Adoption Association.

There are many aspects of adoption and the Indiana Adoption Program is just one of those aspects. We will help you consider some aspects of adoption in this book.

The Picture book is also available on the internet. You can download the book or specific pages at [www.adoptachild.in.gov](http://www.adoptachild.in.gov).

To learn more about Indiana Foster Care and Adoption Association, see us on the web at: [www.ifcaa.org](http://www.ifcaa.org) or call for a brochure: 1-800-468-4228.

To mail correspondence to the Indiana Adoption program send to:

The Indiana Adoption Program  
c/o IFCAA  
509 East National Avenue, Suite A  
Indianapolis, IN 46227

PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN,  
FAMILIES & FUTURE.

JAMES W. PAYNE, DIRECTOR



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## **If I inquire about a child, does this mean I will get to adopt this child?**

A prospective adoptive parent must have completed the Family Preparation process and be approved to adopt a child introduced in this book. If you are just beginning that process or have not yet begun, a child you see here may be living with a new family before you complete the Family Preparation process.

If you become their adoptive parent, a child's future development, well being, and sense of family and community will rest with you.

Therefore, adoption requires serious considerations.

The child's social worker or adoption team will help determine if you and your family are compatible with the child and there may also be several families that are considering the same child.

## ***Subscription Information***

You can receive a six-month subscription to this magazine by mailing a \$15 check along with your name and address to:

IFCAA  
509 E. National Ave., Suite A  
Indianapolis, IN 46227

If you have any questions please call 1-888-25-ADOPT.

## **Meet Our Children**

In this book you will see many different faces of youth. The words next to their faces only tell a partial story. Their biography is not complete. Any young person's story is worthy of telling you, yet what you read here about them is just a few short sentences.

The paragraphs next to each child are an introduction. Beyond the paragraphs, we want you to know the whole biography of a child when you are considering making a commitment as a parent; however here in this book we balance your need to know with a child's need for privacy and sense of well-being.

Children who have experienced foster care all have one thing in common: they have had to leave their home. And by that very fact alone, their need for healing, stability and nurturing requires attention. Children who have had to endure neglect, abuse, or trauma can face many challenges. Those challenges can range from mild to severe and can also be temporary or permanent.

The challenges our children face will not be detailed in the introductions. Listing a short medical or mental health diagnosis can sometimes be misleading and can breach confidentiality. You can read about some of the challenges that are common to many children in the adoption program in a separate section of this book.

In the adoption program, many of the children are older and may have physical, mental or emotional impairments. Some have brothers and sisters in the program with them and they may need to live together or they may need to keep their essential connection to each other through different living arrangements.

The youth featured in this book are in foster care and they may live with a foster family or they may be living in a group home or other child-caring facility such as a treatment center. Every child needs the love and support of a family. We invite you to learn more about adopting children in the Indiana Adoption Program.

You will see a number next to each child's introduction. Please refer to this number when making an inquiry about them.

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## **Jessica (17), Devin (14), Terriashia (12) and De'Stevin (9)**

Jessica is a sweet, affectionate girl who enjoys making things for others and giving them away as gifts. She is friendly and outgoing and enjoys participating in church activities such as children's choir. She absolutely loves cooking and watching movies during movie night with her family.

Devin loves playing the drums and singing in the church choir. He has a lot of athletic ability and excels in basketball. Devin likes to laugh and has a great sense of humor. He is an affectionate young man with a great personality.

Terriashia is an intelligent, well-behaved young lady who enjoys helping others. She has an outgoing personality and has many friends. Terriashia is very active in her church and enjoys playing board games, shopping, and traveling. Terriashia enjoys art and hopes to become an artist one day.

De'Stevin loves to be the center of attention and looks up to his big brother and sisters. He is a friendly little boy who enjoys playing with other children, playing the drums, and singing. De'Stevin also likes to play video games and visit the library.

These children need a family that can provide structure and lots of love and attention. Two-parent families are preferred. [4072ABCDDBS] Vanderburgh County



## **Dezna (15), Mahaley (14) & Elestial (11)**

Dezna is a charming and intelligent girl who loves animals of all kinds. She excels in her school work and makes friends easily. She loves to sing in choirs and play sports like soccer and football. She would love a home with a pool or with a family who enjoys theme parks as much as she does.

Mahaley is energetic and confident. Like her sister, she enjoys singing and is very talented. She keeps herself busy with basketball, soccer, and Girl Scouts. She likes being outdoors, swimming, and camping.

Elestial has a great sense of humor. He is considered the class clown, but still excels in school, especially in reading and spelling. He enjoys sports, fishing, and camping. He hopes to attend basketball camp in the summer.

Dezna, Mahaley, and Elestial need a loving family that can provide a safe, stable environment. (5020ABCBS) Crawford County



### **Clifford (17) and Daniel (10)**

Clifford is generous, sensitive and considerate of others. Though his is a bit shy at first, once he gets to know you, you will see that he has a warm personality and a great smile. Clifford is doing well academically and is very active and strong in sports. He also enjoys playing video games, reading and has recently taken an interest in creative writing. Clifford has a good sense of humor and gets along well with his peers. He loves animals and is especially fond of dogs. Clifford has worked hard and made a lot of progress in the past year. While he is nervous about being adopted, he is also looking forward to being in a family where he and his younger brother can be together.

Daniel loves to go fishing, ride his bike, and play outside! He has a lot of energy and loves all things outdoors. He likes to go camping with his foster family, climb trees, swim, and build forts. He is a very bright little boy and likes reading, playing video games, and learning about sharks. Daniel is very creative and has a talent for drawing. He has a big heart and is very friendly. Like his brother, Daniel loves animals and would enjoy having a dog. These boys will do well in a loving home that can provide encouragement, structure, and clear boundaries and expectations. (5074ABMO) Jefferson County



### **Amy (14), Aaron (13) and Jacob (11)**

Aaron loves art and is a talented artist. His work was on display last year at a university. Aaron is very friendly and likes to talk. He makes friends easily and gets along well with others. Aaron likes camping, fishing, and other outdoor activities.

Amy loves to read. She is also into fashion and make-up and thinks she might like to be a fashion designer some day. Amy likes to playing board games, basketball and doing the hula hoop. She is very loving and enjoys doing family activities with her foster family.

Jacob has a good sense of humor and likes to make people laugh. He enjoys outdoor activities like camping and fishing. Jacob gets along well with his brother and they like to do things together.

These children need a loving, nurturing family that can provide structure and consistency. (6011ABCBS) Brown County



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## **Curley (12), Paul (11) and Ethen (8)**

Curley is a happy little boy who likes to smile and laugh. He likes watching television and playing with his brothers. He likes to clap his hands and will sometimes give a friendly “pinch” just to gain some interaction with others.

Paul is very bright and enjoys school. He says Science is his favorite subject. Paul is talkative, inquisitive, and likes to help others. He enjoys art and likes to color and do drawings. Paul is very bonded to his brothers.

Ethen is outgoing and friendly. He enjoys school and is well-liked by his classmates and teachers. He is very gentle and attentive to his brother Curley, and looks up to his older brother Paul. Ethen likes to play video games and PlayStation.

These boys need a loving family that can provide a stable environment. Families with knowledge and understanding of cerebral palsy with a wheel-chair accessible home are desired. (6033ABC) *Lake County*



## **Shanya (15) and Myles (10)**

Shanya is a very bright and creative girl. She loves to go shopping, particularly for clothes! Shanya enjoys singing, skating, and social networking. She likes to be active in choir, drama, and volleyball. She really enjoys outdoor activities and loves to go swimming and camping. Shanya is a good big sister to Myles and likes to take care of him.

Myles has a very outgoing and charming personality. He is very bright and quick to catch on to new things. He likes to climb trees, ride his bike, and play video games. He is a very fast runner and is on the cross country track team at his school. Like his sister, he loves swimming, camping and most outdoor activities. Myles really likes football and is a professed Colt's fan!

These children need an active family that is patient, attentive, and can provide a stable, consistent environment. They will do best with clear expectations and boundaries. Shanya and Myles get along well with other children and pets. (6077ABBD) *Johnson County*





### **Chris (10) and Nicholas (9)**

Chris is a very friendly and outgoing little boy. He loves country music and likes to sing. He also likes playing with his cars and trucks and other toys.

Nicholas is shy at first but warms up once he gets to know you. He loves going to school and being around people. He likes to draw and write his letters.

These boys have many special medical needs and developmental delays due to injuries suffered in a house fire. Chris uses a wheelchair at school but is able to scoot around the house without his chair. Both boys need close supervision and assistance with all self-care tasks. Interested families will need to be able to provide structure, routine and a well-supervised environment. The home will need to be wheelchair accessible for Chris. (6096ABBD) *Madison County*



### **Danny (15), Dylan (13) and Shalynn (5)**

Danny is a quiet, shy young man who loves sports, especially football and basketball. Danny also enjoys playing video games. His foster mother describes him as being honest and hardworking. Danny does not mind doing chores and is always willing to help when he sees someone in need.

Dylan is very outgoing and friendly. He is very popular at school and makes friends easily. Like his brother, he likes sports and is currently playing football. Dylan also likes playing video games and swimming.

Shalynn is a bright, energetic little girl and can be very charming. She loves all things musical and likes singing, dancing, and listening to music. Although she has not learned to swim yet, Shalynn likes to play in the water. She loves receiving one to one attention from adults.

These children need a loving family that can be firm and understanding while providing consistency, structure, and clear boundaries and expectations. They will need parents that can also advocate for their educational needs as well. (7003SS) *Marion County*



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## **Ian (12) and Gunnar (11)**

Ian is very artistic and creative and loves to draw! He does lots of drawings of animals that are quite good. He also loves being outdoors and being around animals. He is fascinated by snakes, lizards and frogs and is very knowledgeable about animals and their habitats. Ian likes horses and has recently learned how to ride. He is a very bright young man who is sensitive and caring. He would like to work with animals and the environment when he grows up.

Gunnar is outgoing and friendly. He loves to play sports and plays on his school basketball team. Like his brother, he enjoys the outdoors, and likes going to the park, camping, and other outdoor activities. Gunnar also enjoys playing board games and video games with his brother and their friends.

These boys will do best in a two-parent family with a strong, positive, male role model. They respond well to clear boundaries and expectations. They also need a family that can be nurturing and patient with them as they adjust to their new family. These boys have a sister with whom they will need to maintain contact. (7006ABBD) *Scott County*



## **Jasmine (15), Deanne (13) & Chris (5)**

Jasmine is excited about getting dressed up and attending prom some day! Her hobbies include collecting 1000 piece puzzles and stuffed animals. She enjoys board games, hanging out with friends, and going to the movies. Horror movies are her favorite! Jasmine describes herself as a picky eater, but she loves to cook and is a very big fan of seafood, especially shrimp. She is an honor student in school and highly values her education and her relationship with her siblings.

Deanne would love to have her own room some day with a big bed! Collecting stuffed animals, silly band bracelets, and playing soccer are a few of her hobbies. Deanne also loves to be on the computer, playing games or talking to her friends.

Deanne is an animal lover and would love to help care for both cats and dogs. She has a good sense of humor and enjoys laughing with others. Family is most important to Deanne.

Chris likes his teacher and has lots of friends at school. Chris has a few responsibilities at home and he is very proud when he completes them. He is quick to tell you how he loves soccer and playing outside. He is also a big fan of Spiderman. His favorite colors are green and red.

These children need a stable, supportive home with clear boundaries and expectations where they can learn and grow. Family time and family outings are very important to these children and they would love to have both a father and a mother who can spend time with them. (7023ABCIA) *Lake County*





## Spring Bowling Party!

An adoption Match Event was held on March 12 in Clarksville at Blacksiton Bowling Alley. The purpose of these events is to allow SNAP approved families to interact with some of our children waiting to be adopted.

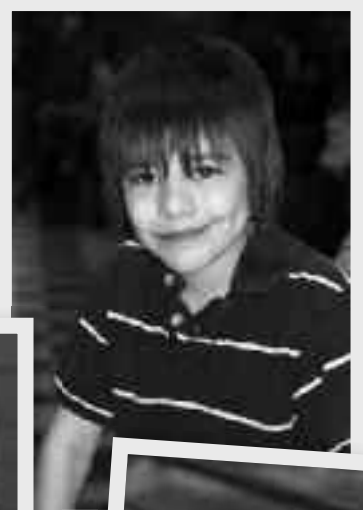
Kids and families got to knock down some pins, eat pizza and get to know each other!

For more information about how to become a SNAP approved family, please contact your SNAP specialist listed on the inside back cover of this Picture Book.



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## Spring Bowling Party!





Look for this symbol throughout our children's pages; it indicates that they have recorded a video message. You can view their video on-line at [www.adoptuskids.org/states/IN](http://www.adoptuskids.org/states/IN).

### **Katie (18)**

Katie is energetic and outgoing. When asked what she thinks is the most interesting thing about herself, she says it's that she was born in Russia. There are actually many interesting things about Katie. She loves gymnastics and has taken lessons in the past. She likes to play outside and particularly likes to swing. She is friendly and talkative and gets along well with other children. Katie likes to wear jewelry, get her nails done and loves the color pink. She likes to go out to eat and her favorite foods are macaroni and cheese, hot wings, and sweet tea. She also loves to sing and enjoys music, dance, and cheerleading.

Katie needs a family that can offer her safety and security. She and is nervous about being adopted because she has learned that "some people seem nice at first, but then really aren't nice." Katie needs a stable, committed family. She will need a family that can be patient and understanding as she learns to trust and feel wanted and safe. Both single-parent and two-parent families will be considered. (3611BS) *Monroe County*



### **Mary (16)**

Mary is a very friendly, caring, and affectionate girl. She is outgoing, easy to talk to and enjoys being around people. Mary enjoys doing things for others and is very nurturing. She is artistic and creative and is a talented singer and dancer. She also enjoys reading, shopping for clothes, and doing hair.

Mary is intelligent and strives to do her best. She has made great strides in the last year and is doing well in school.

Mary hopes to be in a home with other girls close to her age so she can have someone to do things with. She will need a patient, loving, and supportive family that will continue to help her grow and feel safe and secure. Both two-parent and single-parent families will be considered. (3621KY) *Allen County*



### **Justin (10)**

When asked what he likes to do, Justin says he likes to, "swing on the swing and listen to the trees and the pond." He loves being outside, especially when he can jump on the trampoline. When he is inside, his favorite things to do are playing his Nintendo DS and doing anything relating to Pokemon. His favorite food is pizza and he loves to dance.

Justin needs a stable family who can be patient and provide him with a lot of time and attention. He would benefit greatly from having an active father figure. Justin will do best in a family with no other children or significantly older children. (3641BS) *Monroe County*





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## **Jacques (14)** 🧑🏾

Jacques is a very intelligent and creative boy who loves to be the center of attention. He enjoys drawing, hair styling, dancing, and gymnastics. He also enjoys swimming and going to arcades. Jacques is doing well in school and especially enjoys Language Arts. When asked what he wants to be when he grows up, Jacques says he would like to be a lawyer so he can help others and make good money.

He is excited about the idea of being adopted and will need a family that can provide consistency and stability. He needs a family that will encourage him, redirect him when needed, and be patient with him as he makes the transition into his new family. (3659KY) *Allen County*



## **Jerry (11)**

Jerry is a pleasant, affectionate little boy who likes to give and receive hugs. He enjoys wrestling and rough-housing on the floor. He likes music and will dance and sometimes babble, trying to sing along. He likes to rock in his rocking chair or on a rocking horse. Jerry likes swinging and climbing into things he can sit in.

Jerry is a sweet little boy who needs a family that can be patient and loving with him. Families with an extended support system, and knowledge and understanding of developmental delays and autism are preferred. (3682BD) *Bartholomew County*



## **Toby (9)**

Toby just learned how to swim, and would gladly take your hand and ask you to play with him, whether it is in the pool, on the trampoline, or on the computer. Toby is a friendly, outgoing child who loves to be helpful. Toby has made great strides with communication skills and activities of daily living. He is eager to please others and responds positively to attention and affection.

Toby needs an experienced family that can provide structure, routine and close supervision at all times. A two-parent family with a strong extended support system is preferred. [3716MO] *Delaware County*

**David (16)**

David enjoys swimming, going to the movies, and playing in the park. He likes sports, including baseball and football. He likes going to concerts and listening to Rap music. He likes going out to eat and says his favorite restaurant is Don Pablo's.

David has a good sense of humor and makes friends easily. He enjoys positive attention from adults and enjoys one on one attention. David says he would like to have a family that enjoys traveling and doing activities together. David will need a family that can provide a structured and supervised environment. He would do best in a family with no other children or only older children. (3766BD) *Hamilton County*

**Keith (12)**

Keith is a very articulate young man and can hold a conversation in an adult-like manner. He has an interest in architecture, art, and books. Keith likes to read science fiction, novels, and comic books. His hobbies include building things out of Legos, Popsicle sticks, and cardboard. Keith also has a competitive side, and enjoys sports. Keith is very intelligent and excels academically. He is looking forward to attending college some day.

Keith longs to be part of a family. He needs a family that can help challenge and channel his intellect while providing him with a loving, stable home. (37971A) *Lake County*

**Justin (14)**

Justin is a friendly and outgoing young man. He is very popular among his peers and adults. He enjoys watching television, playing outside, and being on the computer. Justin has an interest in electronics and is fascinated by cell phones and computers. He loves visiting websites on the internet and has even designed a few web pages. One is about fire safety.

Justin needs a family that can provide stability, structure, patience, and consistency. A loving family with no children or older children would be ideal for Justin. (40001A) *Lake County*



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## **Tiffany (16)** 🧑

Tiffany has a bubbly personality and lots of energy. She loves music and likes to sing and dance. She enjoys participating in choir at school. She loves to spend time with her friends, go shopping and go to the movies. Tiffany has a deep love for animals and hopes to be a veterinarian someday. She hopes her new family will have cats and dogs. Tiffany enjoys going to church and participating in Youth Group.

She is looking forward to being adopted and hopes her new family will also be involved in church life. Tiffany would like to have older siblings to look up to. Tiffany will need a family that will be supportive and patient as she makes a transition into her new home. (4009BD) *Clark County*



## **Kristian (11)** 🧑

Kristian is an energetic young man who loves to jump and climb. His favorite activities are playing on the jungle gym and in the water. Kristian also enjoys spending quiet time cuddled in a blanket and watching a Disney video or having a book read to him.

Kristian has been making progress with some activities of daily living and responds well to positive rewards. He will need a loving and patient family who will support this growth and can provide structure, routine and close supervision at all times. (4016KY) *Allen County*



## **Katie (17)**

One of Katie's favorite activities is cooking. She loves to cook, bake, and eat! Her specialties are lasagna and cookies! She would like to be a pastry chef some day. Katie has a warm smile and is friendly and talkative. She enjoys being outdoors, riding her bike, going swimming, and playing in the park. Katie also likes arts and crafts. She loves to be creative!

Katie would love to be part of a family. She would like to have a two-parent family and says that she loves little children and likes to help care for them. She likes pets and is particularly fond of puppies, kittens, and monkeys. Katie needs a family that will provide her with a loving, safe and structured environment. She has siblings with whom she will need to maintain contact. (4018IA) *Starke County*



Look for this symbol throughout our children's pages; it indicates that they have recorded a video message. You can view their video on-line at [www.adoptuskids.org/states/IN](http://www.adoptuskids.org/states/IN).

### Christian (15)

Christian describes himself as easy-going and friendly. He is very talkative and likes helping others. Christian enjoys playing sports especially football and basketball. He also likes to go fishing. Christian is intelligent and does well in school. His favorite subjects are reading and spelling. He loves to read, especially mystery novels.

Christian would enjoy living in the country. He likes to be busy and needs a loving family that can provide consistency, structure and support him in his continued growth. Families with parenting experience are preferred. [4023MO] *Blackford County*



### LJ (17)

LJ is a likeable and caring young man with a good sense of humor. He loves to go fishing and mostly likes to fish for bass or catfish. He also enjoys motocross and BMX racing as well as working on cars and bikes. LJ enjoys being outdoors and likes to work in the garden. He likes swimming, playing video games, and playing guitar.

LJ is looking forward to being adopted and ideally would like to have both a mom and a dad. He would prefer being part of an African American family or an interracial family. LJ gets along best with other children his age or older. LJ needs a loving family that can provide structure and supervision. He would benefit greatly from having a strong, positive male role model. [4037MO] *Ripley County*



### Shanika (13)

Shanika is an athletic girl who enjoys basketball, biking and roller-skating. She loves animals and would enjoy having pets in her adoptive home. Shanika likes to sing, dance, draw, and make things for others. She enjoys interaction with adults and with peers. Shanika continues to make progress academically.

Shanika would do best in a family setting that is structured and consistent. She will need experienced parents that can provide a safe and nurturing environment and good supervision. [4055KY] *St. Joseph County*



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## **Devonte (15)**

Devonte is a charming young man who is eager to be adopted. He enjoys wrestling, football and being active. Devonte has expressed an interest in joining a step team at school and wants to play the clarinet. He also likes to listen to music, watch movies and explore the internet.

Devonte needs a family that can be patient and loving yet firm in their rules and expectations. He would do best in a two parent home with a positive male father figure. Devonte has a brother with whom he will need to maintain contact. (4056KY) *St. Joseph County*



## **Logan (15)** 🧑

Logan loves to talk and thrives on positive attention from adults. He is very outgoing and enjoys interacting with both adults and peers. He enjoys taking trips, going to the movies, playing games, and eating out at restaurants. Logan shared that his hobbies are playing video games and BMX biking. Logan has made a lot of progress in the last year and is currently on the A/B Honor Roll at school.

He is at his best when he has a structured and consistent environment. Logan needs a loving family that can be attentive to his needs. He would do best as the only or youngest child in the family. (40571A) *Jasper County*



## **Dennis (10)**

Dennis is a charming little boy who loves to talk about dinosaurs, music, monster trucks, and the movie Cars. He enjoys and is good at playing dodge ball, kickball, and basketball. Dennis likes to give and receive hugs and likes to tickle others and be tickled. Dennis is very excited about getting a new Mom and Dad and likes to talk about what it will be like.

He will need energetic parents that can be patient, providing consistency and structure. His new family will need to be dedicated and willing to work diligently to form an attachment with him. (4059KY) *Noble County*



### Cara (15)

Cara describes herself as funny and friendly. She is outgoing, caring, and helpful. Cara is always willing to participate and jumps in to try new things. She creates wonderful poems and songs to describe feelings. Cara loves small children and animals, especially the cheetah and dolphin. Some of her favorite things include the color orange, pizza and chocolate. Cara has a dream of one day playing the clarinet. She prefers rap or country music. She likes crocheting, knitting, and playing softball. She loves to read and is especially fond of the Harry Potter series.

Cara would benefit from a home with assertive parental figures that provide structure as well as set rules and guidelines. She would do well in loving family with other children. She will need to maintain contact with her siblings. (40611A) *Porter County*



### Sylvester (9)

Sylvester wants to be famous when he grows up! He is very outgoing and likes to make new friends. Sylvester hopes to be a basketball star, or be a musician like Hannah Montana. In the summer he loves playing in the pool, and playing basketball and soccer. He enjoys watching the Disney Channel, coloring, and dancing. Sylvester is very bright and maintains good grades in school.

Sylvester needs a nurturing family that can provide stability, supervision, and appropriate medical attention. He would greatly benefit from a two parent home. Sylvester needs a strong male figure who will be consistent with discipline and who is willing to spend a lot of one on one time with him. He would do best in a home with only older children. He needs a family with a lot of patience and love to get him through the trauma that he has experienced. Sylvester has siblings with whom he will need to maintain contact. (40631A) *Lake County*



### Cyerra (15) 🐾

Cyerra is very exuberant and has a great smile. She has a good sense of humor and likes to laugh. She is full of energy and has many interests. Cyerra likes music and loves to sing and dance. She enjoys playing basketball, rollerblading, and doing crafts. Cyerra describes herself as a "girly-girl" in the sense that she likes getting her hair and nails done and loves to shop for clothes. She loves to sing and has a big voice! Cyerra has a love for animals and enjoys volunteering at the local animal shelter.

She would love to be part of a family who likes to be active and do things together. She enjoys helping around the house with chores and says she even likes to do dishes! Cyerra will do best in a family that can provide consistent structure, boundaries and consequences. Cyerra needs a family that can give her a lot of time and attention as she has missed this in her life. (4073BD) *Bartholomew County*



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## **Brianna (12)**

Brianna is a very sweet and loving little girl. She very much enjoys one on one attention with adults. She can be very caring and empathic to those she feels are less fortunate. She enjoys playing with baby dolls and likes to have her hair brushed and styled. She loves playing on the playground and playing basketball. She is very enthusiastic about going swimming!

Brianna needs a family that can give her a lot of care and attention. She needs a nurturing family that will be patient and encourage her to develop to her fullest potential. Parents with experience with special needs children are preferred. (4077KY) *St. Joseph County*



## **Christopher (16)** 🐾

Though Christopher is a quiet young man, he is known for having a good sense of humor and being a jokester. He does well in school and learns things quickly. He likes to help others and doesn't mind helping with chores around the house. Chris likes sports, especially basketball and football. He enjoys playing video games, listening to music, and watching movies. He likes to go on outings and says his favorite restaurant is Pizza Hut.

Chris would love to part of a family and needs parents who can spend time with him to develop a bond. He is respectful and friendly with adults and would benefit greatly from having a positive male role model in his life. Ideally Chris thinks he would like to live near a city and be with other children either his age or older. While he would love to have two parents, he is open to having a single parent as well. Chris loves dogs and hopes his new family will have pets. (4078BS) *Vanderburgh County*



## **Lewis (13)**

Lewis has a good sense of humor, a beautiful smile and a contagious laugh. He likes being active and playing outside. He enjoys sports and likes playing soccer and kickball. Lewis has a wonderful imagination and is intelligent. His favorite subject in school is Science. Lewis loves dancing, singing, and watching movies. In fact, Lewis loves movies so much he would like to work in a movie theatre when he gets older.

Lewis would do best in a structured home that can offer stability and consistency. A family that is patient, understanding, and can provide one on one attention would be ideal. Two-parent families are preferred. (4089IA) *Porter County*

### **Michael (16)**

Michael likes to be out in nature and enjoys fishing, swimming, and camping. He also enjoys sports such as football, basketball and soccer. Michael has a good sense of humor and likes to make people laugh. He likes drawing and is a talented artist. Michael is an avid reader and likes to read comics and all kinds of books, particularly scary books! Michael loves gardening and is currently caring for four plants. Michael very much wants to be part of a family and hopes to have a sibling or two as well as a pet.

He will need a family that can provide structure and consistency. He will also need some assistance with his school work. Michael would do best with older siblings or as an only child. Two-parent families are preferred. (4090IA) *Porter County*



### **Shawn (13)** 🐾

Shawn has a good sense of humor and can be very charming. He loves to be outdoors and likes to go fishing, biking, and play football and baseball. His favorite foods are lasagna and broccoli and he likes to eat out when he can. Shawn likes playing video games and watching military movies. He hopes to be a Navy Seal when he grows up. Shawn needs a family that can spend a lot of time with him as he has missed out on this in his life.

He would benefit greatly from having a strong, positive male role model in his life. He needs an experienced family that can provide structure and clear expectations and boundaries. [4095MO] *Delaware County*



### **Cheyenne (15)** 🐾

Cheyenne is friendly and affectionate and has an upbeat sense of humor. She enjoys playing basketball, watching television, listening to Rap music, and going shopping. Cheyenne's favorite thing to shop for is shoes! She is very talkative and is not shy about expressing her thoughts and feelings. She enjoys school and says Math is her favorite subject.

Cheyenne would like to join a family and while ideally she would like to have a mother and a father, she is open to considering a single parent or non-traditional family as well. Cheyenne needs a loving, patient family that can provide structure and consistent rules and expectations. Cheyenne has a sister with whom she will need to maintain contact. (4096KY) *Allen County*



# Opening hearts. Changing lives.



## **Austin (9)**

Austin is an inquisitive and friendly little dynamo! He likes going to the playing ground, swimming, riding bikes, and roller blading. He is very interested in dinosaurs, Transformers, and Spiderman. Austin is very interested in cause and effect relationships and how things work. He enjoys being part of a group, but really thrives on one to one adult attention. He enjoys being read to and has a vivid imagination. Austin is very bright and is doing well in school.

Austin needs a family that can give him a lot of attention while providing structure and close supervision. An adoptive family will need to be patient and committed to providing stability while he works on developing a bond with them. Austin needs to be the youngest or only child in the family. (5002DH) *Tippecanoe County*



## **Kimmie (17)**

Kimmie is a friendly, fun-loving girl. She is considerate and strives to please others. Kimmie enjoys school and is a good student. She likes playing Nintendo, going through old photographs, and spending time with her friends. Kimmie would like to get a job because she likes to shop and would like to have her own money. She loves animals and would enjoy having pets in her new home.

Kimmie needs a nurturing family that can provide structure and consistency. (5011KY) *Marshall County*



## **Dezonn (14)**

Dezonn is an outgoing young man with a good sense of humor. He is very intelligent and likes school. Besides reading and playing video games, Dezonn also enjoys going shopping, seeing movies, and playing sports. He has an adventurous side and says he could go to an amusement park every day to ride roller coasters and other ride attractions! Dezonn attends church and is a member of the youth choir.

He would love to be in a home where he is the only child, but he gets along well with other children too. He is a respectful young man and likes to be helpful around the house. Dezonn needs a family that will love him, guide him and provide him with a safe, stable home. He loves animals and would enjoy having pets in the home. (50151A) *Lake County*



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### **Brian (14)**

Brian is a bright young man who learns things quickly. He enjoys listening to music and singing. Brian likes to play on the computer, but also enjoys outdoor activities such as baseball and rock climbing. He loves to be the center of attention and is never at a loss for words.

Brian needs a family that will provide firm, loving boundaries and structure. He would benefit greatly from having a strong, positive male role model. (50261A) *LaPorte County*



### **Zach (16)**

Zach is a very sweet boy who loves puzzles. He is definitely not a picky eater and enjoys all sorts of snacks. NASCAR is one of his favorite things in the whole world. If given the opportunity, he would wear a shirt with a racecar on it every day. He loves one on one attention, and is affectionate.

A family with experience and knowledge about autism and developmental delays would be best for Zach. Single and two-parent families will be considered. (5031DH) *Marion County*



### **Trevionnte (9)**

Trevionnte is a happy and loving child. He enjoys receiving attention and giving hugs. He prefers to be indoors and he recently took three steps — quite an exciting accomplishment for Trevionnte!

He would do best in a family that is able to work with medically fragile children or one that is familiar with Cerebral Palsy and developmental delays. [5035MO] *Delaware County*





# Opening hearts. Changing lives.



## **Steven (12)**

Steven is very excited about being adopted and joining a family. He is an energetic and friendly little boy with a mega-watt smile. He likes to learn new things and says Math is his favorite subject in school. He loves playing outside and playing football and basketball with his friends. Steven says, "I'm a really good artist and I like to draw!" He also said he likes helping others in whatever way he can. He thinks he would like to be a teacher when he grows up so he can help other kids. Steven loves to eat and some of his favorite foods are Big Macs, spaghetti and meatballs, and Chinese food. His favorite restaurant is Bob Evans and he loves their dinner rolls!

Steven needs a family that can be patient with him and provide structure and clear expectations and boundaries. Ideally, Steven would like to have a Mom and a Dad and be part of a family that has pets. Steven would do best in a home where he could be the only child or the youngest child. (5037MO) *Jay County*



## **Shadrick (15)**

Shad describes himself as "funny, smart, and active." He goes on to describe himself as being a cool person to hang out with, outgoing, and having a kind heart. And all of these things are true! In addition to all that, Shad is very athletic and enjoys playing football, basketball, baseball, and track. He likes watching both horror movies and action films. While Shad enjoys reading all types of books, drawing, and making models; one of his favorite activities is playing video games. Shad likes to do things for others and strives to be a positive role model for younger children.

Shad very much wants to be part of a family and is looking forward to adoption. He needs a family that will encourage him and help him continue to grow. Shad is at his best in a consistent, structured environment. (5068SS) *Marion County*



## **Victoria (13)**

Victoria is a very bright girl who has many hopes and dreams. She enjoys gymnastics and riding her bike with her neighborhood friends. She "loves" school and is a good student. Math is her favorite subject. Victoria loves playing volleyball and has been on the volleyball team at school in the past. She likes going to church and participating in youth group activities.

One of Victoria's greatest wishes is to be adopted and join her new family soon. She hopes her new family will enjoy attending church activities as she does, and spending time together having fun. (5066BS) *Knox County*

### **Darrin (15)**

Darrin likes being outside, listening to music, and playing sports. His favorite sports include basketball, soccer, and baseball. Darrin also enjoys playing video games and watching Sponge Bob Square Pants. Recently Darrin got five fish to go in the pond where he lives. He enjoys helping to care for them. Darrin is a quiet young man and enjoys having some personal space and time to process his feelings. He likes school and is making good progress academically.

Darrin needs a family that will continue to support his academic growth and allow him to have some personal space and time to himself. He likes pets and would benefit from learning to care for a dog or a cat. Darrin would do best as an only child or with perhaps one older child in the home. He needs loving parents that can provide structure and consistency. (5079SS) *Marion County*



### **Morgan (15)**

Morgan is friendly and likes to meet new people. She has a great sense of humor and can be very playful. She loves to sing and dance! Morgan loves to go shopping, especially for clothes and shoes. She likes going to the movies and going to Golden Corral, her favorite restaurant.

Morgan says she would like to have both a mother and a father, and wouldn't mind having an older brother or sister to look up to. She will do well with a family that can provide structure, clear boundaries, rules, and expectations. (5084BD) *Clark County*



### **DeAndre (13)**

DeAndre is a people person! He is cheerful, helpful, and eager to please. He can be very generous and compassionate with others. DeAndre likes playing video games and building things with Legos. He likes basketball and football and is a big Colts fan. DeAndre works hard at school and likes to learn. He gets along well with peers and enjoys spending time with his friends. DeAndre likes animals and is particularly fond of dogs. He hopes his new family will have pets that he can help care for.

DeAndre would like to have two parents and would benefit greatly from having a strong, positive male role model. A family with one or two children around his age would be ideal. DeAndre is at his best when his time is structured and he has clear boundaries and expectations. (5098BD) *Clark County*



# Opening hearts. Changing lives.



## **Damar (12)**

Damar is a creative, engaging young man who is eager to be adopted! He is friendly, outgoing, and very likeable. Damar enjoys music, playing video games, doing computer searches, and shopping at gaming stores. He thinks he might like to design gaming systems and games for a living some day. Damar is looking forward to having a father who will spend time with him doing things like working on electronics, playing video games or going fishing.

Damar needs a loving family that can provide consistent rules, boundaries, and expectations. He is at his best when he has a routine in a stable environment. Damar has a brother with whom he will need to maintain contact. (6004KY) *Allen County*



## **Shay (12)**

Shay is an energetic self-starter! She likes to listen to music and dance. Shay likes helping around the house, and would like to learn how to cook. She enjoys attending church and participating in church youth activities. Shay likes school and does well academically. She loves braiding hair and thinks she would like to be a hair stylist when she grows up.

Shay needs a supportive, loving family that can provide structure, consistency, and clear boundaries and expectations. (6022SS) *Marion County*



## **Roger (13)**

Roger is a very helpful young man. He enjoys helping his foster mother around the house by cleaning and assisting with the laundry. He loves to read books and enjoys having others read to him. Roger has become involved in Irish style dancing through a local church and greatly enjoys that activity. Roger gets along well with others and loves getting attention.

Roger needs a family that can be patient and will nurture his development. A two-parent home that can provide supervision consistency would be ideal. Families with knowledge and understanding of developmental disabilities are preferred. (6023KY) *St. Joseph County*



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### **Akeem (16)**

Akeem enjoys sports, video games, and playing on the computer. He likes to play basketball and go bowling. Akeem is shy with strangers, but likes to joke and tease with people he knows. He is caring and creative and likes to help others. Akeem has a good sense of humor and likes to make others laugh.

Akeem needs a loving supportive family willing to advocate for his educational needs and support services. Akeem will do best in a home where he is the only child. (6039BD) *Bartholomew County*



### **Marisa (15)**

Marisa is very active and likes to keep busy. She enjoys swimming, camping out, and going to new places. Marisa likes reading, drawing, and shopping! She likes school and says her favorite subject is Math. Marisa loves animals and hopes to be an "animal cop" when she grows up.

Marisa needs a loving family that can provide structure, consistency, and stability. Both single and two-parent families will be considered. (6040BD) *Scott County*



### **Summer (14)**

Summer loves to give and receive hugs. Though shy at first, she actually loves being the center of attention. She describes herself as a "country girl" and would enjoy living out in the country and having pets. She likes to play games and is known among her friends as a "card shark." Her favorite card game is Rummy. Summer enjoys being outdoors and likes playing soccer, softball, and going fishing.

Summer needs a family that can provide structure and stability. She thinks she would be most comfortable with a single mother, but she is open to other families as well as long as they are able to give her a loving home. (6046BS) *Dubois County*



# Opening hearts. Changing lives.



## **Joshua (8)**

Josh is energetic, smart, and affectionate! He likes to play outside especially if other children are involved. Josh enjoys riding his bike, playing video games, and swimming. He is very interested in puzzles or any activity that involves putting things together.

Josh gets along well with other children as well as adults. He will do best in a two-parent home that can be patient and understanding as he adjusts to a new environment. Josh likes animals and does well with pets. (6053BS) *Monroe County*



## **Dustin (16)** 🧑

Dustin is a very compassionate and caring young man. He enjoys playing football, swimming, and fishing. He likes listening to music, playing video games, and drawing. Dustin likes to have fun and enjoys participating in activities with both peers and adults. He likes being outdoors and enjoys working in the yard.

Dustin is eager to join a family and would like have both a mom and a dad. He would like to have siblings and hopes his new family will have pets. Dustin needs a loving family that will set clear boundaries and expectations and advocate for him educationally. (6054SS) *Marion County*



## **Brandon (13)**

Brandon enjoys attending school and doing his homework. He is a good student and an excellent speller who likes to show off his abilities. He likes playing video games, drawing and making comics. Brandon is very much into Martial Arts and has received a black belt in three different arts!

Brandon is a friendly, polite and respectful young man who needs a family that will continue to encourage him and can give him a lot of time and attention. Brandon would like to have both a mother and a father. He would do best in a home where there are no other children, or with younger children. (6064IA) *Lake County*



### Brandon (14)

Brandon has a great personality and loves to joke and tease. He is bright and inventive and has created his own board game in the past. Brandon likes playing video and computer games, fishing, and playing sports. He likes being outdoors and enjoys gardening and bee keeping.

Brandon needs a family that can provide a structured environment with clear boundaries and expectations. Two-parent families are preferred. (60651A) *Starke County*



### Brandon (15)

Brandon is a friendly young man and a good conversationalist. He enjoys being with others and loves one on one attention. Brandon works hard in school and says science is his favorite subject. He likes to write and has even written some poetry. Brandon is eager to be adopted and longs to have a sense of belonging.

Ideally he would like to have both a mother and a father. Having a positive male role model would be of great benefit to him. Brandon needs a family that will be patient and supportive as he transitions into his new family. (60661A) *LaPorte County*



### Brennen (13) 🐶

Brennen is a talented, outgoing young man who likes drawing, singing, and acting. He enjoys reading poetry and is good at creative writing. His favorite outdoor activities include playing basketball, tossing the football, and fishing. Brennen likes working with wood and says when he grows up he wants to be either a carpenter, mechanic, or basketball star!

Brennen needs a family that can be patient and supportive allowing him to transition into his new home at his own pace. He thinks he would do best in a home where he can be an only child, or have older siblings. Brennen has a grandmother with whom he will need to maintain contact. (6067KY) *Adams County*



# Opening hearts. Changing lives.



## **Brandy (10)**

Brandy is very friendly and outgoing. She enjoys being the center of attention and loves to talk! She likes to play all kinds of games and enjoys being outdoors. Brandy has an independent nature and has a creative side. She loves singing, dancing, and learning to cook new dishes. She is very bright and likes learning new things in school. Brandy would love to be part of a two-parent family and is wishing for a big sister. Her face lights up when she talks about animals and says she would really like to help care for a pet.

Brandy will do best with a family that can provide close supervision and guidance. She will benefit from a stable home environment where there is a consistent routine with clear expectations and boundaries. She will do best in a home where she can be the youngest child. (6069BS) *Vigo County*



## **Abby (13)**

Abby has a very engaging personality and likes to be around people. She is athletic and likes playing volleyball, basketball, and soccer. Abby likes reading, crocheting, and drawing. She likes going for walks, swimming and listening to country music too. Abby says she likes school and her favorite subject is Social Studies.

Abby would like to be part of a two-parent family who likes to be active and will show a strong commitment to her. She likes participating in extra-curricular activities and would like her family to support those activities. Abby likes being around other children and seems to get along best with younger children. She hopes to have a pet in her new home. (6076BD) *Clark County*



## **Victoria (11)**

Victoria is a shy little girl with a sweet smile. She loves to draw and enjoys writing in a journal. Victoria likes to go fun places and visit friends in their homes. She likes playing with Bratz dolls, and playing video games and board games, especially Monopoly. Victoria does well in school and says her favorite subjects are Science and Reading. Victoria is looking forward to being adopted and hopes her new family will do fun activities together. She would like to have her own bedroom and she would like to paint the walls "baby blue." She says she hopes her new family will be "nice" and have a swing set.

Victoria needs a loving family that can give her a lot of time and attention. She will likely need to make a slow transition into her new home so she can feel secure. Victoria has siblings with whom she will need to maintain contact. (6075KY) *Allen County*



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### **Sa'Niya (13)**

Sa'Niya loves to talk! She is friendly and outgoing and can be very engaging. Sa'Niya likes singing and dancing and can be very dramatic. She has participated in some programs through her church and has done a very good job. Sa'Niya enjoys shopping and going out to eat. She likes being outdoors and riding her bike or playing games. She needs a supportive, nurturing, active family that can offer her a lot of one to one attention and structure.

Both single and two-parent families will be considered. Sa'Niya has brothers with whom she will need to maintain contact. (6082IA) *Lake County*



### **Nathan (13)**

Nathan can be a sweet, loving boy. He likes to engage in one-on-one activity with adults. He likes to know how things work and enjoys taking things apart and putting them back together. Nathan likes playing basketball and is a Pacer's fan. He likes to be helpful and often offers to set the table for dinner. Nathan loves horses and likes helping to care for them, including cleaning the stalls! He also likes skateboarding, watching movies and NASCAR racing.

Nathan needs a family that can provide a safe, stable home environment with good supervision and clear expectations and boundaries. Nathan has a brother with whom he will need to maintain contact. (6086DH) *Putnam County*



### **Billy (17)**

Billy is very friendly and outgoing. He is very interested in photography and likes to photograph wildlife and people. He loves playing basketball, hanging out with friends, and playing video games and board games. Billy says he likes school and says Math is his favorite subject. He likes to read and says the Harry Potter series is one of his favorites. He thinks he would like to go to trade school after he graduates high school and become an electrician or carpenter.

Billy needs a family that can guide him into young adulthood and set clear boundaries and expectation. Billy has a brother with whom he will need to maintain contact. (6087DH) *Putnam County*



# Opening hearts. Changing lives.



## **Paul (11)**

Paul likes playing video games and reading comic books. He likes being outdoors and playing basketball with his friends too. Paul is a friendly and kind little boy who likes to help others. He is known for helping his peers with their school work or even with their chores! Paul likes school and is making mostly A's and B's on his report card. He enjoys Science and learning about space. He likes Rap music and says one of his favorite artists is Lil Wayne.

Paul needs a loving, family and would benefit greatly from having positive adult role models. He will do best with a family that will be supportive and encouraging. He needs a stable home with structure and consistent rules and consequences. (6089BD) *Madison County*



## **Ricky (12)**

Ricky is an energetic and fun-loving little boy! He loves outdoor activities and likes playing soccer, football, and volleyball. He likes running and riding his bike. Ricky enjoys being a helper both at home and school and responds well to praise and encouragement. When he is indoors he likes playing video games or watching television.

Ricky needs an affectionate, patient family that can offer him a lot of one-to-one attention. He is at his best when he has structure and a consistent routine. (6090BD) *Johnson County*



## **Damont (13)**

Damont is a sweet and lovable boy. He enjoys playing video games and playing football. He likes school and is a capable student. Damont is eager to be part of a family and enjoys participating in activities with his foster family. He enjoys participating in church life and hopes his new family will share this value.

Damont needs a loving family that will make a permanent commitment to him. He is at his best in a structured environment with clear boundaries and expectations. (6099KY) *Allen County*

### **De'Angelo (14)**

De'Angelo is creative in many areas including art, sculpture, music, and poetry to name a few! He is gifted at drawing cars and airplanes. During the summer, he enjoys playing basketball and football, and during the winter, he uses his energy to build forts, pack snowballs, and make snow angels.

De'Angelo needs to feel a true sense of belonging with a strong family who can dedicate themselves to meeting his multiple needs and helping him develop a sense of self-worth. De'Angelo will do best in a home with a consistent routine, structure, and clear boundaries and expectations. (7000SS) *Marion County*



### **Jory (15)**

Jory is a laid-back young man who likes to be indoors. He enjoys playing video games and watching television. Jory gets along well with others, especially when they have similar interests. He enjoys being around people.

Jory would like to be part of a family who is loving and caring and could spend time with him. His new family will need to be supportive as he continues to work through his grief and loss issues. (7001DH) *Morgan County*



### **Devin (6)**

Devin has experienced great trauma in his life, though he has fought past many ailments showing that he has a "never give up" spirit. Devin responds to the touch and voices of people he appears to recognize when they are around. He will sometimes turn his head toward the person. He also has shown some expressions of happiness when a window is opened near him.

Devin needs a family that can provide total care for him 24-hours a day. Families that have medical training or experience with medically fragile children would be a plus. (7002KY) *Allen County*



# Opening hearts. Changing lives.



## **Andrew (12)**

Andy is a bright young man who is very creative, artistic, and athletic. He is very likable and has a good sense of humor. Andy has a good imagination and likes to draw things and then give his drawings to others. He can be very kind and giving. Andy loves animals and says his favorite animals are dogs, cats and bunnies. He likes watching the Colts, building with Legos, and collecting Hot Wheels cars and Bakugans. Andy has an interest in the military and would like to build or design machines some day.

Andy needs a family that can provide clear boundaries and expectations as well as good supervision. He would benefit from having a strong, positive male role model. The family best suited for Andy will be able to commit to spending the time necessary to bond with him and help him feel secure while he heals from past traumas. (7004BS) *Monroe County*



## **Amon (15)**

Amon is a friendly young man who likes to be a role model for younger children. He enjoys eating, watching movies, and his favorite team, the Pittsburgh Steelers. He would like to play football at the college level. Amon has an interest in helping homeless people and others in need.

He is eager to be adopted and would prefer a two-parent home where he could have siblings. (7005SS) *Marion County*



## **Robert (15)**

Robert is a bright, articulate young man who loves playing sports. He is friendly, outgoing, and loves to be the center of attention. Robert's favorite sport is basketball and he hopes to play on a team once he joins his new family. Robert is eager to be adopted and has stated, "I want to be part of a family that loves me for who I am and enjoys doing things I like." Robert especially hopes his new parents will want to attend his school athletic events to support him when he plays. In addition to sports, Robert enjoys playing video games and spending time with friends.

Robert hopes to be part of an active two-parent family either as an only child, or with other children near his age. Robert has siblings with whom he will need to maintain contact. (7010BD) *Bartholomew County*



**Mark (11)**

Mark is very outgoing and has a lot of energy! He is very talkative and will talk with you about almost anything. He is very curious and likes to know what everyone is doing. Mark likes to do hands on activities and needs to have his energies directed.

Mark needs a home that can provide a high level of structure, supervision, and clear boundaries and expectations. It would be best if he were the only child in the home, or the youngest child in a home with no pets. (7014KY) *Allen County*

**Amanuell (10)**

Amanuell is very loving and fun to be around. He likes playing football, reading, and going to church. While playing football in a summer league, Amanuell developed some positive peer relationships and learned the importance of teamwork. Amanuell would love to be part of a family that enjoys outdoor activities, sports, and traveling. He would like to have a younger brother or siblings about his age.

Amanuell would benefit from being in a two-parent home that can offer him love, stability and structure. Single parent families will also be considered. (7015SS) *Marion County*

**Da'Jaion (10)**

Da'Jaion has a cheerful demeanor and a contagious laugh! He enjoys playing with small toys and especially toys with lights and sound. While he cannot walk independently, Da'Jaion utilizes a wheelchair and a stander. He is able to scoot around on the floor and can cover ground pretty quickly! Da'Jaion can drink from a sippy cup and feed himself finger foods.

Da'Jaion needs a loving family that can provide twenty-four hour supervision and total care for him. Families with knowledge and experience with special needs children are preferred. (7016KY) *Allen County*



# Opening hearts. Changing lives.



## **Jessica (16)** 🧑

Jessica likes to laugh and has a beautiful smile! She is friendly and easy to talk to. When asked what she would like others to know about her, she responded, "I can be very sweet and loving." Jessica loves to read and can get lost in a good book. She also loves to cook and says her specialty dish is chicken-cheese lasagna. Jessica likes school and is an Honor Roll student. She enjoys doing crafts, going out for Chinese food with her mentor, and shopping for shoes! When she grows up, Jessica thinks she would like to become either a chef or a cosmetologist.

Jessica is looking forward to being adopted and ideally would like to have both a mom and a dad although she is open to a single parent as well. Jessica needs a loving family that will give her guidance while providing a safe, consistent environment with clear boundaries and expectations. (7017BD) *Madison County*



## **Zen (13)** 🧑

Zen is a friendly young man with a shy smile. He describes himself as an "outdoorsy kind of person." His favorite outdoor activities include hunting, fishing, camping, and riding dirt bikes! He likes sports and enjoys both playing and watching football, basketball and baseball. Zen likes school and says his favorite subjects are Math and Science. He thinks he would like to join the army one day and perhaps become a weapons technician.

Zen gets along well with other children and says he would really like to have an older brother or siblings near his age. He would like to have both a mom and a dad, but is open to being part of a single parent family as well. Because he loves the outdoors so much, Zen would love to live in a rural setting. He likes animals and would enjoy being able to have pets too.

An active family that likes outdoor activities and sports would be a good match for Zen. He will do best in a home that has structure and communicates clear boundaries and expectations. He would benefit greatly from having a strong, positive, male role model. Zen has some birth family members with whom he would like to maintain contact. (7018BS) *Knox County*



## **Taylor (15)**

Taylor is an intelligent girl with a positive attitude. She is friendly and outgoing and has a natural charisma. Taylor gets along well with others and is very insightful and caring. She loves school and enjoys learning. She makes good grades and tutors other students who are struggling academically. Taylor's favorite subjects are English, Science, and Health. Taylor is very creative and is a talented writer. In fact, she has many talents! She can draw, sing, and has learned to play a variety of instruments. She also enjoys performing, including singing, acting, and reciting poetry. Taylor knows how to knit and do needlepoint. She has even learned how to do cake decorating. Taylor is athletic and likes to play volleyball and basketball. She also enjoys reading, and playing strategy games such as chess.

Taylor needs a loving family that can provide supervision, consistent discipline, structure, boundaries, and nurturing. Taylor enjoys being active and would likely do best with a family who is active and will support her involvement in extra-curricular activities. Taylor would do best as the youngest child or the only child in the home. (7020KY) *St. Joseph County*



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### Rayburn (11)

Rayburn is a very outgoing and energetic boy. He likes to be on the move and enjoys being outdoors, running, playing on the playground, and swimming. He likes to do hands-on activities and is very creative when making things out of Legos or Play-doh. Rayburn likes school and is working to catch up to his grade level. He is affectionate and enjoys one on one attention from adults.

Rayburn wants very much to be adopted and become a permanent member of a family. He would do best in a two-parent family that can give him a lot of time and energy while also being patient and nurturing. Rayburn is at his best when he has a structured, consistent environment and routine. (7021BD) *Madison County*



### Kelttin (16)

Kelttin is a very polite and friendly young man. He communicates well with adults and gets along well with authority figures. He does not mind doing chores and is always willing to help others. He is intelligent and enjoys learning new things. Kelttin likes school and recently began making Honor Roll. He likes both reading and writing stories, working with computers, and tinkering with electronics. Kelttin enjoys playing soccer and has played on high school teams. When he gets older, Kelttin is thinking of joining the Air Force. He would like to be a pilot and has always had an interest in flying.

Kelttin needs a family that can be patient and understanding while also providing structure, clear boundaries and expectations. Ideally he would like to have a mom and a dad, but is open to single parent households as well. Kelttin likes animals and would enjoy having pets and helping to care for them. (7022BD) *Hamilton County*



### Nate (10)

Nate is an energetic, engaging little boy. He is very inquisitive and likes to know how things work. He loves outdoor activities such as bike riding and swimming. Nate says, "Swimming is the bomb!" He enjoys searching for frogs, toads and bugs! He is very interested in reptiles. Nate is very intelligent and says Science is his favorite subject. He enjoys learning "facts" on many different topics. Nate likes animals and is very gentle with them. He likes shopping, playing video games and going out for pizza.

Nate is looking forward to being adopted and is eager to have a Dad. He will do best in a stable, consistent and caring environment with an established routine. (7025SS) *Marion County*



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## **Matthew (14)**

Matthew likes being outdoors and enjoys playing sports, camping, and landscaping. He is very interested in electronics and likes playing video games and being on the computer. Matthew loves music, dancing and art. He is a big eater and even likes to cook when he has the opportunity.

Matthew would like to be part of a family. He will need a family that can provide structure and clear boundaries and expectations. He would benefit greatly from having strong, positive, male role models in his life. (7027SS) *Marion County*



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## What is Adoption?

Adoption is meant to establish a legally recognized, lifelong relationship between a parent and child who are not parent/child related biologically. The adoptive parent(s) becomes legally and morally responsible for the child's safety, education, health care, value development, development of life skills, as well as the day-to-day care of that child.

Our society acknowledges that the man and woman who biologically create a life are traditionally the ones responsible for the child. Our society created adoption as a means to meet the needs of children whose biological parents are not able to assume the responsibilities of parenting.

Originally, adoption laws were based on "ownership"-type principles and focused on the rights of adults. However, over time, laws have become much more focused on meeting the emotional, physical, spiritual and developmental needs of the child.

In the past, the two people who biologically gave them life raised most children. This is no longer the case in our country. Today, single parents, grandparents, stepparents, foster parents or other parents acting as guardian are parenting a majority of children. Many children are now experiencing what it is like to have multiple sets of parents, grandparents and extended families. It is common for a child to experience a series of adults functioning in parental roles in their family.

Children who are adopted always have at least two sets of parents. For these children to be able to understand who they are, it is important for them to come to know, at some level, each of the parents who have had a part in creating the life they are living. All children try to make sense of these complex relationships. The more they know about the people to whom they have had any type of parental tie, the more successful they will be at developing a more complete picture of themselves.

According to Vera Fahlberg, a child and family expert and author, we can divide the parenting role in a child's life into three parts. Part One, ***the Biological Aspect of Parenting***, gives life itself to a child. The biological parent also determines the sex of the child, eye color, hair color and texture, intellectual potential, temperament, potential talents as well as some of the medical conditions that may surface as the child develops. Racial and ethnic heritage are also determined by the biological factors.

Part Two, ***the Legal Aspect of Parenting***, is financially responsible for the child. It is the legal parent's responsibility to keep the child

safe and secure. The legal parent makes all important decisions for the child, for instance, deciding where the child will live, what school the child will attend, what medical care is given, etc. This parent is also legally and financially responsible for the child's actions.

Part Three, ***the Parenting Aspect of Parenting***, sees to the day-to-day care of the child. This parent is responsible for providing love and discipline. This parent models behavior for the child to copy. This is the person who cooks meals, washes clothes, helps with school work, takes care of the ill child, watches the child's ball game etc. This person is the child's primary educator who teaches values, religion, and most life skills.

For any child, it would be much easier to understand life if the same one or two people filled all three of these parental roles throughout the child's entire life. For many children, and all adopted children, multiple people are involved. Most children are able to do quite well with multiple "parents" as long as transitions are handled appropriately and the child has someone to talk with about the changes. In fact, many very successful adults credit their success to having had many parent models and mentors along the way.

Circumstances and the legal system may change who provides two of these three parts of parenting to a particular child. However, circumstances and the legal system cannot change the biological connection. **The child's bonds to the biological parents are permanent and important to whom that child is as a person.** Anyone planning to adopt a child needs to recognize and value this fact.

Recognizing this is the only way that you will be able to understand the identity questions that the child will wrestle with as he or she grows and matures. The adoptive parent, who assumes both the role of legal parent and parenting parent for their adoptive child, can help them reach their highest potential by helping the child deal with such issues.

In a legal sense, people become a member of a family in one of three ways: by birth, by marriage or by adoption. "Family" is defined in our legal structure as two or more people who: 1)



have biological ties; or 2) make a long-term legally binding commitment to each other.

When entering a family by birth, the child shares genetics as well as cultural and ethnic heritage with others in the family.

When entering a family through adoption or marriage, family members blend themselves emotionally with another person or persons who usually differ in genetics and heritage. There generally is no biological tie. However, governments and societies

have developed ways to recognize the great importance and permanence of such deep, emotional commitments.

Laws, regulations and practices have been developed to give persons related by adoption and marriage comparable rights and responsibilities as those related by birth. Our society expects all families, whether formed by birth, adoption or marriage, to be permanent connections that offer love, acceptance and support for all members.

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## How Do I Start The Adoption Process in Indiana?

The Adoption Process for a child who is a ward of Indiana requires the supervision of the Department of Child Services. The process begins with Family Preparation and parents are required to attend educational workshops and complete a Family Preparation Assessment, sometimes called a Home Study. You can learn more about the process in another section of this book. Prospective Adoptive parents must be recommended to the Indiana Adoption Program after their Family Preparation is complete and approved.

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You will be given the contact information of those in your community responsible for helping you with Family Preparation and your contact information will be submitted to your local Training Coordinator and to your local county Department of Child Services. The Training Coordinator will send you a schedule and they may contact you about registering for the educational workshops. You can also choose to contact your community agencies.

If you have an approved Family Preparation Assessment or Home Study from the Indiana Department of Child Services and want more information on a child introduced in the Picture Book, contact the Indiana Adoption Program. You will be given the contact information for the child and your contact informa-

tion will be submitted to the child's social worker and Special Needs Adoption Specialist.

We encourage you to contact the Indiana Adoption Program first in order to ensure that you communicate to the proper individuals responsible for any child featured in this book

To begin to inquire about Family Preparation contact the Indiana Adoption Program:

Call 1-888-25-ADOPT or e-mail at [adoption@ifcaa.org](mailto:adoption@ifcaa.org)

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## How to Adopt Overview

The information below provides an overview of the steps involved in adopting a child from the foster care system. This information has been reprinted in part from the National Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC) and can be read in more detail on their website at [www.nacac.org](http://www.nacac.org) or at [www.adoptachild.in.gov](http://www.adoptachild.in.gov).

### Step 1: Educate Yourself about Adoption

#### Where Do I Start Learning?

Ask adoptive parents where they started their adoption journey and you will get many answers. For some their process began with reading a newspaper or magazine article. Maybe they found adoption material on the Internet. They may have checked out a book on adoption from their local library. Others may have known someone who had already adopted and talked with them about expectations and what steps to take. Others may have looked in the phone book for adoption agencies in their area, then called and received basic information, either on the phone or in the mail.

The more information you have, the better choices you can make for yourself and your children-to-be. Individuals must choose for themselves when and how to gather the information they need.

#### National Adoption Organizations

**The National Adoption Information Clearinghouse (NAIC)** publishes a wide variety of adoption fact sheets, many of which are free or very inexpensive. It also provides information about state and federal adoption laws, and tracks upcoming adoption conferences. NAIC's web site includes a searchable collection of adoption-related articles and report abstracts, as well as a directory of more than 5,700 public and private adoption agencies, support groups, and government officials. To learn more, contact:

##### NAIC

330 C St. S.W.  
Washington, DC 20447  
888-251-0075 or 703-352-3488  
fax: 703-385-3206  
e-mail: [NAIC@calib.com](mailto:NAIC@calib.com)  
web: [www.calib.com/naic](http://www.calib.com/naic)

#### North American Council on Adoptable Children

This national organization offers information and resources to support adoption of children from the foster care system. They host a national conference each year for adoptive families and families waiting to adopt.

970 Raymond Avenue, Suite 106  
St. Paul, MN 55114  
phone: 651-644-3036  
fax: 651-644-9848  
e-mail: [info@nacac.org](mailto:info@nacac.org)

#### Adoption Conferences

Many national, regional, and local groups hold annual adoption conferences with workshops geared toward new or prospective adoptive parents.

- Some publishers and booksellers produce or market many child welfare and adoption-related materials. Some of the best known include:

#### Written Materials

##### Child Welfare League of America

440 First St. N.W., 3rd Floor  
Washington, DC 20001-2085  
202-638-2952 • fax: 202-638-4004  
web: [www.cwla.org/pubs](http://www.cwla.org/pubs)  
Headquarters  
2395 Crystal Dr., Suite 250  
Arlington, VA 22202  
Phone: 703-412-2400 • fax: 703-412-2401

##### Perspectives Press

P.O. Box 90318  
Indianapolis, IN 46290-0318  
317-872-3055 (phone & fax)  
web: [www.perspectivespress.com](http://www.perspectivespress.com)

##### Tapestry Books

P.O. Box 651  
Ringoes, NJ 08551  
877-266-5406 • fax: 609-737-5951  
e-mail: [info@tapestrybooks.com](mailto:info@tapestrybooks.com)  
web: [www.tapestrybooks.com](http://www.tapestrybooks.com)

- Your phone book. Adoption agencies, advocates, attorneys, support groups, and more can be found listed in the Yellow Pages under "Adoption."
- Use your public library. Most libraries now have online access so you can use the Internet, find listings of periodicals, and do inter-library transfers. A wealth of free information can be located through these means.
- Your home computer can be a gateway to adoption information. The Internet has no shortage of information about adoption.

## Self Assessment

Children don't need perfect parents, just one or two individuals willing to meet the unique challenges of parenting and make a lifetime commitment to caring for and nurturing their children. One of the advantages of special needs adoption is that almost any responsible adult can become an adoptive parent. Prospective parents do not have to be rich, married, under 40, highly educated, or homeowners to adopt. Far more important are personal characteristics like:

- a belief in adoption and an ability to commit
- patience and perseverance
- a good sense of humor and talent for keeping life in perspective
- a love of children and parenting
- the ability to roll with unexpected changes, stresses, and challenges
- the ability to deal with rejection without taking it personally
- the ability to accept without judging
- tolerance and understanding for your child's conflicting feelings and your own
- an awareness that healing doesn't come quickly, all wounds cannot be healed, and your child may not attach to your family
- the strength to be consistent and set limits
- a willingness to learn new parenting techniques and advocate for your children's educational and medical needs
- resourcefulness

If you have all or most of those qualities, then ask yourself these questions:

- Do I clearly understand why I want to adopt?
- If applicable — do my partner and I work as a team? Are we both committed to adoption?
- If applicable — have I talked with my own children and considered their feelings?
- Does my lifestyle allow me the time necessary to meet the needs of a special child?

Think carefully about your answers to these questions. You may decide to pursue a different type of adoption, consider foster care, or realize that adoption really is not for you. Take the time to make a good decision, because it is a decision you and your adoptive child will live with for life.

In addition, before seriously contemplating special needs adoption, prospective parents must honestly evaluate their desire and ability to successfully parent children who have troubling pasts and uncertain futures. Many children who become available for adoption at older ages have not received the early care that kids need to develop a strong sense of security, trust, and self-esteem. Many also suffer from conditions caused by past trauma, or pre-natal exposure to alcohol or drugs. Children whose backgrounds include traumatic experiences, abuse, and/or neglect may exhibit symptoms of distress such as:

- aggressiveness
- attachment disorders
- attention deficits and hyperactivity
- bed wetting
- defiance
- depression
- impulsiveness
- learning disabilities
- low self-esteem
- lying
- poor peer relationships/social skills

Fortunately, through therapy, medication, and consistent care, children can overcome or at least better cope with many of these challenges.

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Most children put their new adoptive parents through a period of testing to see if the parents are truly committed or just waiting for an excuse to desert the child as others have done before. To improve your chances of successfully adopting a child who has special needs, be prepared to offer a home environment that combines extra love, support, and attention with clear structure and consistent limit-setting. Parents should also be ready to actively advocate for their child at school, with peers, and within the community. It can be immensely helpful for parents to have a support network or belong to an adoptive parent support group.

## Step 2: Decide What Type of Adoption You Want to Pursue

Even if you already know that you want to adopt a child who has special needs, you still need to make a number of choices about your adoption. Most importantly, you need to decide what type of child you are willing to bring into your family. What disabilities and challenges (physical, mental, emotional, or behavioral) can you comfortably handle? What age range, background, and ethnicity would fit best within your household and community? Are you open to helping your adopted child maintain contact with some of his or her birth relatives? Can you welcome a group of two or more siblings into your home?

Next, you might want to consider whether you would rather work through a public or a private adoption agency. Though most children who have special needs become available for adoption through the public foster care system, both public and private agencies can help you locate a child or sibling group to adopt.

## Step 3: Investigate Ways to Cover Adoption Expenses

Many agencies do not charge service fees to families who adopt children from the foster care system. However, you will need a home study, and because adoption is a legal process, you may need an attorney. The cost of a home study can vary from \$0 to \$3,000. Attorney fees and court costs can range from \$2,000 to \$5,000, and special needs adoptive families often incur additional costs for medical services, counseling, etc. — costs that may continue throughout the child's lifetime. Fortunately, due to federal and employer-initiated programs, parents have several options for covering the cost of special needs adoption.

### Employer Assistance

Employers who offer adoption benefits may provide workers with:

- direct cash assistance for adoption expenses
- reimbursement of approved adoption expenses
- paid or unpaid leave (beyond federal leave requirements established through the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993)
- resource and referral services

To request a list of employers who provide adoption benefits or learn more about employer provided adoption benefits, contact: Adoption Benefits Coordinator, National Adoption Center, 1500 Walnut Street, Suite 701, Philadelphia, PA 19102; 800-TO-ADOPT or 215-735-9988.

### Tax Credits and Exclusions

For tax years beginning 2008–2009 the adoption or credit has increased. See form 8839, "Qualified Adoption Expenses" and its instructions for more information. Check the Internal Revenue Services website at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) and look under Forms & Publications.

### Adoption Subsidies

If you adopt a child who has special needs, he or she may be eligible for federal adoption assistance. Adoption assistance payments are designed to help offset the short- and long-term costs associated with adopting children who need special services. Children who are wards may be eligible for adoption assistance benefits if they meet specific eligibility guidelines. Ask your child's Family Case Manager about the child eligibility for subsidies.

### Indiana Adoption Subsidy

The new adoption subsidy guidelines can be found on the Department of Child Services website. Go to [www.in.gov/dcs](http://www.in.gov/dcs) — when you look at the page, on the left-hand side are tabs. Go to the pull-down arrow of Policies and click on Child Welfare policies. When you get to that page you will see a list of Policy Changes via Administrative Letters. About 3/4 of the way down, you will find an Administrative Letter from Director Payne, titled "Indiana Adoption Program" and it has a January 2009 date. The letter is 15 pages long and outlines the entire subsidy program.

## Step 4: Select an Adoption Agency

### How to Find Agencies

To find as many agencies to choose from as possible, consider several of the options listed below:

- The Indiana Adoption Program is coordinated through the County Department of Child Services (CDCS) and private Licensed Child Placing Agencies (LCPA) that are contracted with the local counties to provide adoption services, including Family Preparation. You can contact the Indiana Adoption Program at 1-888-25-ADOPT or e-mail at adoption@ifcaa.org for agency information in your area.
- Look in the Yellow Pages under “Adoption” or “Social Services” for private adoption agencies. If you live in a small town, you may want to check in a phone book from a larger community nearby.
- Contact adoptive parent support groups or adoptive parents for suggestions. Both are a great source of information about agencies and adoption, plus they are usually eager to share what they know with prospective adopters. To find an adoptive parent support group in your area contact your local county DCS to see if they know of one or use the Internet to search. Support groups are generally very informal and you may need to ask people in your community who have adopted to find out if a group meets near you.

### Finding the Right Agency for You

To find a public or private agency that is a good fit for you, your beliefs and values, and your unique situation, compare information from several different agencies. Most will gladly provide details about their services and requirements upon request. Before selecting an agency, take the initiative to interview agency representatives by phone or in person to learn more about them. You may want to ask:

- Who can adopt from the agency?
- What kinds of children does the agency place (ages, backgrounds, etc.)?
- Does the agency work with the foster care system or is it exclusively a private adoption agency?
- Where do the agency’s children come from, and how many are legally free for adoption?
- How long, on average, must one wait for a child? What is the time lapse between application and placement?

- How much does a completed adoption cost-in total and part by part?
- What are the assessment or home study requirements?
- What services — such as parenting classes, support group activities, access to therapy and counseling, and respite care — will the agency provide before and after a child is placed in your home?
- Can the agency provide references from parents who recently adopted from the agency?

## Step 5: Let Your Agency Know You Are Serious about Adopting

When you call an agency to let staff there know you are interested in adopting, the person you talk to may ask a series of screening questions or simply volunteer to send literature about the agency. If you want to adopt relatively soon, find out how you can get the process started.

One common first step is an orientation meeting or training session for prospective adoptive parents. At the meeting or training you will likely:

- meet social workers and learn about policies and practices regarding adoption
- learn what types of children are available for adoption through the agency
- learn about foster care
- be asked to examine your feelings about adoption, and judge if adoption is the right choice for you
- gain insight into the challenges and rewards of adoptive parenting
- obtain application materials

## Step 6: Adoption Application

The application process may be different between private agencies and those agencies (LCPA) that contract with the DCS for the Indiana Adoption Program. If you are adopting a child who is in foster care, you may need to attend several of the educational workshops before you begin the application or Family Preparation process.

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If you find that the application process is hard to understand, ask the agency or another adoptive parent for help. Don't let the challenges of completing forms keep you from pursuing adoption.

Find out how long it will take for the agency to process your application once you have completed the forms. Ask when you should next expect to hear from the agency, and how you can schedule and prepare for an assessment or home study.

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## Step 7: Attend Adoption and Parenting Classes

Public agencies commonly require pre-placement training to acquaint prospective parents with issues that can arise after a child or sibling group is placed with them. School-aged adoptees bring not only unique special needs, but also a history of life experiences that will affect interactions with adoptive parents, new siblings, schoolmates, and others. Issues related to disability, culture, early abuse, and a child's birth family should all be discussed before a child is placed in your home.

Prospective adoptive parents who want to be approved to adopt children through the Indiana Adoption Program must complete 26 hours of adoption preparation training in scheduled workshops. Pre-Adoption Training is scheduled through your local Training Coordinator. To find out who the Training Coordinator is in your area contact the Indiana Adoption Program.

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## Step 8: Begin the Family Preparation Process

The Family Preparation process can loosely be defined as an educational process designed to help your social worker learn more about your ability to parent and provide a stable home, to teach you about adoption and its effect on children and families, and to prepare you to parent a child whose experiences and history are very different from your own. Everyone who hopes to adopt must have a completed Family Preparation Assessment, also called a home study. Depending on the agency, the worker, and the prospective parents' cooperation, the process can take anywhere from two months to a year.

### Items You May Need for a Family Preparation Assessment (Home Study)

Specific requirements for assessments or home studies vary by agency, so be sure to ask for a list of the items and information your agency needs. The following items are commonly required during the assessment process:

- an autobiographical statement — a statement you create about your life history
- certified copies of birth certificates for you, your partner, and any children
- a certified copy of your marriage license
- certified copies of divorce decrees
- the death certificate of a former spouse
- certified copies of the finalization or adoption decrees for any adopted children
- child abuse and criminal record clearances, or a notarized statement from the police declaring that you and your partner have faced no felony convictions
- income verification (may include tax returns, W-2 forms, and paycheck stubs)
- a statement of health provided by a physician, which might include lab test results or a statement of infertility
- written references from friends, employers, neighbors, etc.

At some point in the process, you may also need to pay for the home study. The cost through a public agency may be quite low or even free; other agencies typically charge between \$500 and \$2,000 for a completed study.

### Questions You May Be Asked

During Family Preparation meetings with your worker, you can expect to answer questions about your background, your education, your job history, your marriage, your leisure activities, your religion (particularly for religiously affiliated agencies), and your experiences with children. For instance, the worker may ask:

- What is your family like? How will you integrate your new child into your family?
- How will your extended family treat an adopted child?
- How is your marriage? How do you make decisions, resolve conflicts, and express your feelings?



- Why do you want to adopt?
- What is your home like? Are there places for your child to play or spend time alone?
- What is your neighborhood like?
- How do you plan to address discipline issues with your new child?
- What was your family like when you were growing up? How were you raised? Are you close to your parents?
- Where do you work? Is your schedule flexible enough to accommodate the responsibilities that come with parenting?
- What sort of child care arrangements will you make for your child?

The aim of any assessment or home study is to help the agency locate the best home for each child it places, and make good matches between prospective parents and children. If you have questions about the process, ask your social worker or agency.

## Step 9: Begin Searching for a Child

If you adopt through the Indiana Adoption Program, you are urged to complete training and your Family Preparation process before you begin searching for a child. It may take several months for you to complete the process and become approved to adopt, so a child that you see listed in the Picture Book now may not be available several months from now.

The children are listed in the Picture Book by their first name, followed by an identification number. The last two letters of the identification number are the initials for the SNAP specialist for the child. The SNAPs and their contact information can be found on the back inside cover of the Picture Book.

If you adopt through a private agency, learn how the agency will conduct a search. What criteria do they use to match children with families? Are they willing to search outside your immediate area for a child? If you learn of a child in another state, will the agency pursue the child for you?

## Step 10: Considering a Child

Before agreeing to accept any child or sibling group for adoption, learn as much as you can about the child — including prenatal care and exposure to drugs or alcohol, birth parents' med-

ical histories, attachments to foster families or other relatives, foster care placements, relationships with siblings, interests and talents, etc. Most agencies want adoptive parents to get to know children before agreeing to adopt. If the child has certain medical conditions or other disabilities, decide if your family is prepared to address issues that may arise from the child's situation.

If you agree to adopt and accept placement of a child whose birth parents' rights have not been voluntarily surrendered or involuntarily terminated (known as a legal-risk placement), you must accept the chance that the child could be returned to his or her birth parents. Until birth parents' rights are terminated, the child cannot legally become a member of your family and must instead stay in your home as a foster child.

### Questions for Prospective Adoptive Parents to Ask

- a. What is known about the child's birth history?
- b. What is known about the child's developmental history — physically, mentally, emotionally and socially?
- c. Is there any evidence of handicap? Any suspected learning difficulties?
- d. When was last contact with any birth family member?
- e. Are there pictures the birth family can pass on, or any family memento?
- f. Is there a Life Book for the child?
- g. Are there any siblings? Will it be possible or beneficial for ongoing contact with siblings (if they have been separated)?
- h. What social and medical history is available on the parents? On extended family members or siblings?
- i. Do the parents have a history of drug or alcohol abuse? Was the mother using substances during the pregnancy?
- j. What was the home environment like? What was the environment of the foster home(s) like?
- k. How many moves or placements did the child experience and why did they occur?
- l. What is the child's current adjustment status?
- m. Has the child been prepared for the adoptive placement? How can you help?
- n. What is the child's current health status? Does the child have any allergies?

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- o. Is there any history of physical, sexual or emotional abuse? What treatment has been pursued?
- p. What method of discipline works best with the child?
- q. Does the child accept and give affection?
- r. Does the child have any therapeutic needs or treatment plans?
- s. What adoption subsidy options are there for the child?

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## Step 11: Prepare for Your Child's Arrival

Anticipate how the addition of a new family member will affect your life and plan accordingly. Depending on your situation and the child you adopt, you may need to:

- Update the family's insurance. Adoptees can be covered under your health insurance from the date they are placed with your family. Group health insurance carriers must insure adoptees under the terms of their parents' policy and cannot deny coverage due to pre-existing conditions. Add a child to your health insurance plan within 30 days after he or she is placed in your home. If your child is eligible for an adoption subsidy, he or she may be covered through Medicaid. Also change beneficiary designations on life insurance policies and update wills as needed.
- Get and keep a copy of the adoption decree with the child's amended birth certificate. Once the adoption is finalized, that document may be sealed and neither you nor the adoptee can access it. Without it, some adoptees have had trouble getting passports and other official documents. With it, adoptees may have an easier time searching for their biological roots, if and when they decide to do so.
- Prepare to get a new social security card and birth certificate for your child that recognizes the child's new last name and family situation. To claim your child as a dependent for tax purposes, the child must have a social security number.
- Learn as much as you can about the child's habits and personality. Talk to the child's foster parents and worker so you can learn information that will help ease the child's transition into your family. What are the child's favorite foods and games? What is the best way to comfort the child?

- Keep items that tie to the child's past. Encourage the child to bring all his possessions from previous homes, and ask the foster parents and workers for copies of any pictures they have of the child. Never throw away broken toys or worn out clothes unless the child wants to. Familiar objects and smells are comforting, and the child needs you to respect that he has a past and prior attachments and loyalties.
- Make your house child-friendly. Reposition or remove household objects that could be dangerous to your new child. Prepare the child's room to make it welcoming and to signal that the area belongs to him or her.
- Inform your other children about changes that will occur. Tell your children how their roles may change when the new child arrives. Prepare them to share, adjust schedules, and withhold judgment during the transition. Include everyone in visits and trial weekends before the child is placed, and establish clear ground rules for behavior, interaction, and discipline.
- Negotiate an adoption assistance agreement. Parents who adopt an eligible child with special needs from a public or private agency can receive federal or state benefits for their child. Ask your agency what steps you must take to obtain a subsidy and negotiate an adoption assistance agreement, including any post-adoptive services and subsidies.

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## Step 12: The Child is Placed in Your Home

If you adopt a younger child, you may need to find day care. If you adopt an older child, you may need to enroll him or her in school; arrange for therapy, counseling, or tutoring; and identify respite care options. You might also want to join an adoptive parent support group.

Children who are placed for adoption through public agencies may move in with an adoptive family as soon as the parents complete required pre-placement visits and are approved to adopt—provided the timing is not unnecessarily disruptive to the child's schooling or other activities.

When a new child is placed in your home, you will assume temporary legal custody. For a few months, while your family undergoes the inevitable adjustment period, your agency will monitor how the placement is proceeding.

The monitoring period typically lasts about six months to a year. During this time, the worker may call or visit to assess how you and your new child are adjusting, and to answer questions. If all goes well, at the end of the monitoring period the agency will recommend to the court that the adoption be approved.

### Step 13: File a Petition to Adopt

An adoption petition is the document filed in court that initiates the legal aspect of adoption. Through the petition, adoptive parents formally request permission to adopt a specific child. To file a petition you will likely need the following information and documentation:

- the child's birth certificate or birth date and place of birth
- a written statement that confirms your desire and suitability to adopt, as well as your ability to provide financially for the child
- a written declaration that the adoption is in the child's best interest
- your name, age, and address
- the date on which and from whom you received custody of the child
- a statement of the legal reason why the birth parents' rights are being (or have been) terminated
- a disclosure of any relationship that you share with the child (other than as an adoptive parent) — such as being the child's aunt, grandparent, or stepparent

### Step 14: Finalize the Adoption

Your adoption is not legally complete until your newly created family goes through the finalization process. Finalization hearings usually take place within a year after a child is placed in the home. Before scheduling a hearing, check with your agency to make sure you have completed the necessary paperwork. If you are missing required documents, the finalization could be delayed.

The finalization hearing is a judicial proceeding, sometimes held in the judge's chambers, during which adoptive parents are granted permanent legal custody of their adopted child. The hearing, which usually lasts only 30 to 60 minutes, is designed to establish the legality of the new family unit, and confirm that

the adoptive parents are willing and able to provide for their new child.

#### Who Should Attend the Hearing

The following individuals generally attend the finalization hearing:

- the adoptive parents and adoptee(s)
- the adoptive family's lawyer
- the agency social worker who placed the child with the adoptive parents

#### What the Hearing Involves

To verify that the adoption should take place, the court will attempt to establish that the child has been placed in a safe, loving home. Expect to list all the identifying information included in your adoption petition and answer questions such as:

- Why do you want to adopt?
- How will you care for your new child?
- How will your family adjust to a new child?
- Is there anything the court should know before finalizing this adoption?

As soon as the judge signs the adoption order, you gain permanent legal custody of your child. Finalization is the last formal step in the adoption process and marks the official beginning of your new family. From this point, learn as much as you can about post-adoption services (like respite care, support groups, etc.) that can help you make the most of your new role as an adoptive parent.

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## Common Challenges of Children With Special Needs

Children in the Indiana Adoption Program are often considered to have “special needs.” Special Needs can mean different things to people. The Adoption Program has been referred to as a Special Needs Adoption Program (SNAP) and the regional representative coordinating the adoption process for a child is called a SNAP Specialist.

Special Needs are the unique challenges each child faces and will require parents to assist them in their childhood development and schooling in a knowledgeable way. Special Needs can describe physical disabilities, medical conditions, emotional difficulties and developmental issues.

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### Abuse

Many of the children, regardless of their age, in the Indiana Adoption Program have experienced abuse. This can mean physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or any combination of these types of trauma. Abuse generally leaves its mark with behavioral problems, physical impairments and therapeutic needs that require the attention of parents and professionals working together to benefit the child’s future development.

### Attachment

This term describes a child’s ability to form relationships. Children who have been abused, neglected, or have experienced disruptions in significant relationships may face challenges in creating new relationships.

### Attachment Disorder

An attachment disorder is a condition in which children have difficulty forming loving, lasting close relationships. Attachment disorders vary in severity, but the term is usually reserved for those who show a nearly complete lack of ability to be genuinely affectionate with others. They may seem distant, insincere or uncaring and have difficulty trusting others.

### Attention Deficit Disorder/Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADD/ADHD)

ADD/ADHD is a diagnosable, treatable, biologically based disorder. The primary symptoms include some combination of being inattentive and being distracted, being impulsive, and in some children, physical restlessness or hyperactive behavior.

### Developmental Disabilities (DD)

This term describes many conditions that may be mild or severe and generally includes any physical, mental or emotional condition, which will continue to inhibit the normal developmental progress of a child. Many children have educational requirements that must be met through the Special Education process of their school.

### Drug-Exposed

A child born to a mother who used drugs such as cocaine or certain pharmaceuticals while she was pregnant may have damage to their nervous system. A newborn will appear stiff and rigid and have prolonged crying episodes and be at an increased risk for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). Some children will develop behavior and learning difficulties.

A child’s challenges can range from mild to severe, and be temporary or permanent. The environment provided in a child’s future development, that may include you as their parent, will to a great degree affect the measure of their challenges.

## **Emotional Disability (ED)**

Abuse, trauma and sometimes genetics can result in various degrees of multiple emotional challenges. This term is also used as eligibility criteria for services at school through Special Education under state and federal law.

## **Fetal Alcohol Syndrome/Fetal Alcohol Effects (FAS/FAE)**

### **Alcohol-Related Neurodevelopmental Disorder (ARND)**

FAS/FAE is a set of physical, mental and neurobehavioral birth defects associated with alcohol consumption by a child's birth mother during pregnancy. Prenatal alcohol exposure does not always result in FAS—although there is no known safe level of alcohol consumption during pregnancy. Some children affected by alcohol exposure before birth do not have the characteristic facial abnormalities and growth retardation identified with FAS, yet they have brain and other impairments that are just as significant. Alcohol-Related Neurodevelopmental Disorder (ARND) describes the functional or mental impairments linked to prenatal alcohol exposure.

## **Learning Disability**

Children with learning disabilities may be of average or above average intelligence but have difficulties remembering or understanding information. This term is also used as eligibility criteria for services at school through Special Education under state and federal law.

## **Mental Disability**

Mental disabilities is a term that is used to describe a wide variety of different challenges and can affect children in ways that are unique to each child, especially in regards to levels of severity. This is also a term used as eligibility criteria for Special Education services.

## **Neglect**

Neglect is the absence of essential and healthy nurturing of a child for their physical, intellectual, and emotional development. Neglect includes physical neglect, child abandonment and expulsion, medical neglect, inadequate supervision, emotional neglect and educational neglect by parents, parent substitutes, and other adult caretakers of children. Children who have experienced neglect may be challenged with emotional problems.

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## The Legal Aspects of Adoption

Prospective adoptive parents should consult an attorney for legal advice and as they prepare to adopt a child.

### Selecting an Attorney

Federal and state laws that apply to foster care and adoption require certain steps to be followed prior to the finalization of an adoption. It is important to have an attorney to represent you in the adoption process. Your family, friends or individuals you know who have adopted may be able to recommend an attorney for legal advice and you can find out more information on attorneys from your local county Bar Association. Sometimes it is helpful for an attorney to have knowledge of the foster care system.

For a referral to an attorney trained by ACT in adoptions from foster care, or for a free consultation with an ACT-trained attorney, please view the following website for contact information at: [www.adoptioninchildtime.org](http://www.adoptioninchildtime.org)

### Attorney Fees

Attorney fees vary around the state. You will need to ask the attorney what fees they charge and how they bill their services. Since some children are eligible for an adoption subsidy (a one-time reimbursement of legal fees or non-recurring adoption expenses with a maximum expenditure of \$1500 per child) your attorney may be able to assist you in applying the subsidy to their fees.

### Approval

Prospective adoptive parents need an approved Family Preparation Assessment (Home Study) to be recommended for a child who is a ward. Your local county Department of Child Services (DCS) and/or the private agency (LCPA) that contracts with the county must determine if you have been approved. You are required to have written approval before a child can be placed with you for adoption and through your local court jurisdiction.

### Agency Supervision

Indiana law requires that adoptions be granted only after a period of supervision has been met. The child and adoptive family relationship must be supervised by a local county Department of Child Services or private child placing agency (LCPA) that contracts with them. The length of the supervision period is at the discretion of the court, however most courts require a standard time period of six months.

### Required Consents

The consent of the child's mother, if she is living, is required by law to complete an adoption. The consent of a child's father who has established paternity or signed a paternity affidavit is also required. The county Department of Child Services (DCS) may have completed a court action to terminate the parent-child relationship so that a child who is a ward can be legally free for adoption, whether the child's parents have consented or not determines the type of court action that is necessary. You will need the consent of the CDCS that has the responsibility of care and supervision of the child you wish to adopt for the court proceedings, unless the court finds that their consent is not necessary to serve the best interests of the child.

### Adoption Petition Filing

In Indiana, an attorney needs to file the adoption petition and represent the family through the court process. A petition may be filed in the county where the pre-adoptive parent resides, or in the county where the child resides, or where the Department of Child Services (DCS) or private agency (LCPA) has custody of the child. If you are not an Indiana resident, you may petition to adopt a child who is a ward of Indiana in the county where the LCPA or DCS has custody or the county where the child resides.

If you are married, both you and your spouse must sign the adoption petition. Partners of an unmarried couple may not petition to adopt together and in such cases, only one partner may be the petitioner.

### Adoption Filing Fees

The adoption filing fee consists of the following: The adoption history fee, which is \$20 and the putative father registry fee, which is \$50. Both of these fees are sent to the State Department of Health for records maintenance; and the county clerk's office fee, which can range from \$100 to \$200. The court may not require payment of the clerk's fee if you are unable to pay it based on an affidavit regarding your income and expenses.

### Adoption Assistance

If a child has been determined eligible for adoption assistance, the adoption assistance agreement **MUST** be signed by all parties before the final adoption is entered.



## Adoption Chart

There are four basic types of adoption: public agency adoption, domestic private agency adoption, international adoption, and independent adoption. As the chart below shows, requirements, costs, and timing vary between and within the different types of adoption. To decide which type of adoption is best for you, think seriously about the type of child you would like to adopt (for example, an infant, an older child or group of siblings, a child from another country, a child who has special needs, etc.).

Type of Adoption	Definition	Children Available	Approximate Cost	Who Can Adopt	How Long It Takes
<b>Public agency adoption</b>	an adoption directed and supervised by a state or local Department of Human Services (or Social Services, or Human Resources, or Health and Welfare, or Child and Family Services, etc.)	children with special needs (kids who are harder to place due to emotional or physical disorders, age, race, membership in a sibling group, backgrounds); rarely infants	from \$0 to \$1,500 (depending on the state, up to \$1,500 of "nonrecurring" adoption costs for eligible special needs children may be reimbursed)	flexible eligibility requirements for adoptive parents; on a case-by-case basis, will consider single parents, parents over the age of 40, parents who have other children, parents with low incomes, etc.	starts slowly, but for those who have an updated home study, placement can occur as soon as a few months after selecting a child
<b>Private agency adoption</b>	an adoption directed and supervised by a privately funded, licensed adoption agency	sometimes handle special needs children; more commonly associated with younger children and infants	\$6,000 to \$25,000; lower for special needs children; some agencies have sliding fee scales	agencies may recruit parents based on race, religious affiliation, etc.; for infant adoptions, birth mother often chooses	a few months to a few years (sometimes longer for infant adoption)
<b>International adoption</b>	process of adopting a child who is not a U.S citizen, which may be accomplished privately through an attorney, or through an international adoption agency	about 88 countries currently allow their children to be adopted by U.S. citizens—6 countries in Africa, 20 in Asia, 32 in Europe, and 30 in Latin America; ages range from infant to teens; health conditions vary; generally infants	\$7,000 to \$30,000 (varies by country; travel and travel-related expenses may be additional)	depends on agency and country requirements; some will accept single parents, most prospective parents are between 25 and 45 years old	six months to several years depending on the child's age and health, and the country's political climate
<b>Independent adoption (not legal in all states; also known as private adoption)</b>	an adoption initiated by prospective adopters and completed with help from an attorney or adoption counselor		\$5,000 to \$40,000 (includes prospective parents' cost of finding a birth mother, certain birth mother expenses, and attorney's fees)	birth mothers typically choose the adoptive parent — preferences tend to run toward younger, affluent, married couples	variable; as long as it takes to find a birth mother who will see the process through to finalization

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## Youth Connections Program

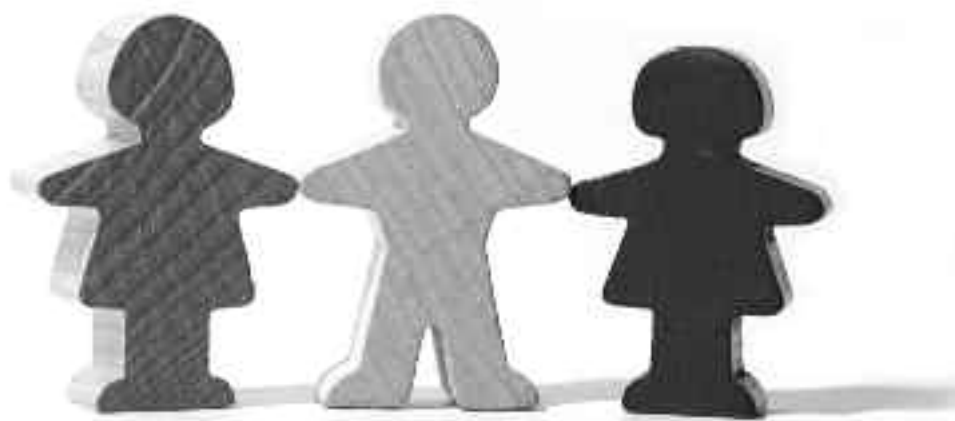
The Department of Child Services (DCS) works with teens who are ages 14 through 18 for whom an adoptive family has not been identified or who have expressed that they do not want to be adopted; but the youth need a caring adult in their life to help them make the transition to adulthood.

The Youth Connections Program has been implemented to assist teens who will be on their own when they leave foster care. Every young person aging out of foster care should have at least one caring adult in their life whom they can count on to be there for them when they need support, guidance, advice and resources.

What can you do? Consider that a teen on their own will need someone to talk to; for advice or a sympathetic ear or to celebrate a birthday, they may need help finding a job, finishing school, or locating a safe place to live, a place to do laundry or use the telephone, a ride to work, an occasional meal, some emergency cash, they may need a coat or someone to advocate for them.

Youth Connections Program Specialists will provide support to the adults and teens to help build and sustain a relationship that will nurture a long-term connection. They will assist in identifying Independent Living services and community resources for the teen.

To find out how you can help and to receive further information on the program, please contact one of the people listed below, nearest to your own location.



Beth Prebeck  
Southern Youth Connections Specialist  
DCS Brown County Office  
121 Locust Lane, P.O. Box 325  
Nashville, IN 47448-0325  
812-988-2239 (Work)  
317-439-6599 (Cell)  
812-988-1279 (fax)  
Beth.Prebeck@dcs.in.gov

Barbara A. Gainer  
Northern Indiana YCP Specialist  
Youth Connections Program  
217 East Southway Blvd, Suite 202  
Kokomo, IN 46901  
765-865-2212  
765-864-3000 fax  
Barbara.Gainer@dcs.in.gov

# Special Needs Adoption Area Specialist Locator Map

## Thank you for your interest in Indiana's Adoption Program.

This map shows the Special Needs Adoption Program (SNAP) specialist who coordinates adoption information for their Team.

The counties are divided into six Teams.

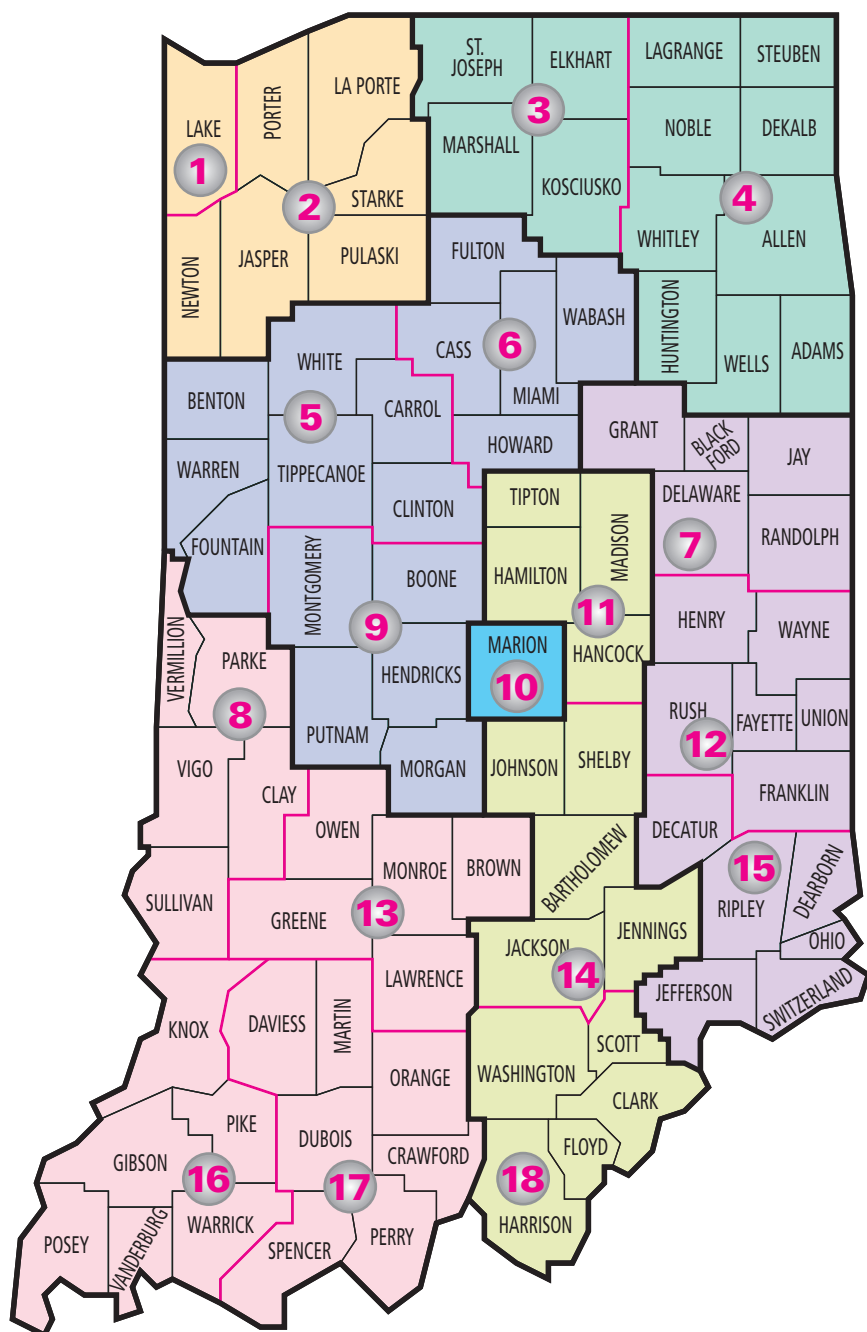


### Sharon Swanson

4150 N Keystone Avenue  
Indianapolis, IN 46205-2843  
Office: 317-544-3890  
Email: Sharon.Swanson@dcs.in.gov

### Ivraline Applewhite

(219) 881-2043 ext: 13280  
661 Broadway  
Gary, IN 46402  
Email: ivraline.applewhite@dcs.in.gov



### Krysta Young

(260) 458-6498 ext: 10373  
201 East Rudisill Avenue, Suite 200  
Ft. Wayne, IN 46806  
Email: krysta.young@dcs.in.gov

### Denise Halliburton

(765) 482-3023 ext: 12862  
953 Monument Drive  
Lebanon, IN 46052  
Email: denise.halliburton@dcs.in.gov

### Marty Ogden

(812) 663-6768 ext: 12954  
1025 East Freeland Rd. Suite B  
Greensburg, IN 47240  
Email: marjorie.ogden@dcs.in.gov

### Beth Dillon

(317) 392-5040 ext: 11917  
2535 Parkway Drive, Suite 1  
Shelbyville, IN 46176  
Email: elizabeth.dillon@dcs.in.gov

### Brenda Stoner

(812) 254-0024 ext: 12191  
4 North East 21st Street  
Washington, IN 47501  
Email: brenda.stoner@dcs.in.gov

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FAMILIES & FUTURE.

JAMES W. PAYNE, DIRECTOR



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[www.adoptachild.in.gov](http://www.adoptachild.in.gov)

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*Subscription information  
is available in this book on  
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